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Bard

Let the imagined *one* bend on the anvil of the two
—two *heatures* and cold they are enough, poor things,
wet as seals and the caves gaping mammothly
beneath our feet — just under freezing —
keine Nacht dir so lang — two heavens open

children sing on Easter morning
and a sandal is lying blank in the desert. Are these enough,
outposts, for your song? Red poll of the pecker,
heathen happiness — wind works in a little flower,
adequate? What nonsense time makes of attitude!

A woman translating from a Romance language
has to be a little more clever than her devious
or imagined original — poetry! Has to be a little
bigger than the room she occupies, a wonder, bathwater
gushing out of the sky, her shoes fly by, happiness

is often a matter of simple neglect — the tribunal
closed for the weekend — leave me alone — a stone off duty
rolls away from the world and we come forth,
nobody knows us at first, we are everybody's husband,
the gardener, gamekeeper, blind harper in the wood,

I hammer flowers on the anvil of desire — is that
what he said? — and our sparks chatter up beyond the sky.

16 April 1995

W I N D

sundown, walking
into it, the wind
in my face loud

a bell in an empty sky

a bell
is emptiness

a thousand of me
hurrying into the soundless of it.

16 April 1995

It might be more like a dragnet
fishing through the bright morning
for something to say: a word
remembered. A hand
brought to another's hip: *By bone*
she may have meant, *we jar*
out of the Conversation
into the real. Touch and forget
into pure sentience. Just know this.

17 April 1995

So what I thought the neck of a swan
was the prow of a boat. Strange
the way someone's gentle music drifts along the air
and becomes arrogantly everybody's.

The reach of summer things. Where does
this boat ever go? If I have daylight I remember,
tall narrow houses of Amsterdam,
what could it have been like in winter

before electricity! Still pitch dark
at eight in the morning. Bless the candle
that let them climb their skinny twisty stairs
and canals hold light long after sunset.

Bless the candle. I light one, it totters
on its base in the spring morning, setting
all this winter stuff in motion, dark
worry, painted candles, claustrophobic, Dutch.

Sound reaches in. But light is quiet
for all its famous speed. Sits there
and lets our eyes — all renaissance and wet —
come reach out for it, what it shows, a sheen

on property. The skin of things we love.
Every time I see this picture I get it wrong,
boat or waterfowl, Everglades or Molokai,
I'm like a calendar with glued-together leaves,

I belong to how I saw it first. The then
of things takes my breath away. A sound
comes visiting again. The boat is quiet. Paint the candle
in the lonely house, come sail the light.

18 April 1995

Give an accounting of the reason. Stars
reflected on the bay. Give an example
you use instead of thinking. There are blue
flowers on the lawn even now, and yellow birds.
Give their names. Helena, Hermia of course,
the world round them revolves. A house,
give the measurements of God's house.
A rock garden, an eyebrow, a wading pool.

19 April 1995

Not just once. Every day
you have to leave
the palace. This
is remorse. Resolution. Every.

Today's first thing red
shouldered hawk
glided low over lawn
then into bare trees,

lost the sight of him
in there but saw his shadow
still swooping. Green soon.

We divide
from ourselves. In sun
bare trees. Remorse
in ascension. Soon.

20 April 1995

P A R A D I S E

Come then as know so few as that:
a hat perched on a broken marble Maybe
plinthed up from a rainball street:
Piccadilly of my dreamest dears, an ankle
shimmering under a cab door open
whisk one or all of us away. No park is far.
It is Paradise, where the rights of man
are ribs and the wifely nighttime
covers us with stardown. All is pie.
I know a city like that and a hurry, real
woollen liberals in a row, shopfronts,
and in the cellar of an old chapel white
as new pine wood a dry old stick stands up
round which the faking angels ply
protecting this kingdom and a buried head.

20 April 1995

Letterscape, over a fuller rinsing
steeped fleeces clean:

forgive me,
I sinned against my mind
with you,

there is a cathedral of it,
wormwise high, into the forgiving
atmosphere, the short attention span
of wind, light, cloud, the coast of France.

Nothing is there
and I am with it, penitent, idly walking,
a kind of pilgrimage from shadow to shadow,
on the blocks of sidewalk, crack by crack

as roads go. Let them.
My business is with this cleaning
of what was busy wanting in me.
Want is penury is moan. Fuller's earth,
fingernails, opals, moons.

20 April 1995

Of course I want to take off my body like everybody else
and be summer wind and silk rags in it and a crow

and the crows have built their nests in the top of my head,
I promise I'm not going to talk about birds,
I will keep going on, like Boston and opera,
knowing no better, a whole bunch of goldfinches now

but I remember my foolish promises — a promise
is a kind of rose isn't it, so many
many petals and how long can it live,
you fragrant excuse.

21 April 1995

French masters, Fauchon and Montfaucon—
between these my ire and my grief, an appetite to walk
up Rivoli like someone else, to nose
the gilt gateway of the Galérie Apollon — ça
and only ça the teaching weather, the talking
horse, the stone that was your mother. There
or in the Rue Dante, pockmarked with bullets
from the nights of the Commune, holes that were your womb.
You come from what you see.

And what you dream about
(in those long stupid baseball saturated August afternoons)
(dreams without even the courtesy of sleep) (all that
daying and saying and hope-a-hoping) was your father.
Tall and white and greedy, a city
dancing in an old suit of clothes
but dancing forever. Paris
is the only evidence of all there is.

22 April 1995

As if were enough of all because
a loop of say God over the crow's flight
guised as a cloud. And low
across the meadow an owl
quick with measuring.
He saw the bodies carried out
and knew the smell of what he saw.
Truth is a kind of religion
won't let you backslide.
Even in dream know it was not dreaming.

23 April 1995

[on laptop: apr2495.wri]

Landing together. In foam
we reached the same

island. Your hand in mine
exploring the salty lubricant of number.

You are everything to me. The rain
custodian, the narrow streets

lead us only up. Near the top
your little house we made the mind.

Telescope. Mainland. Moon.
The seals of winter. Cormorants, gulls,

ducks are enough to think with.

25 April 1995

Given: that every perception is an island
marooned in an estuary.

The river of us keeps coming
from so far. It is sun and shade.

Ten directions, from them they
also come. A blackbird
(narrow fluty thing) and jay
(*craintif, agressif*)

then the humble Polish
of the wild turkey you hear in the wood,
all consonants, its anxious
shirking of our neighborhood.

Why am I here? I am a cardinal
of the oldest religion, my body
altogether crimson inside —

Fletcher's *Purple Island* maybe me —
bees nuzzle dandelions — Saint Fran-
cis's electronic carillon
(how many L's in bells?)

slongs (rather than bongs) out a saddish
tune for the dim siesta time
twixt lunch and vespers.

(Siesta comes from *sext*, noon from *nones*,
but we doze after lunch and things
swoop from branch to branch like crows.)

25 April 1995
KTC

